



National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

June 15, 2017

In reply refer to: P-17-3

Mr. John W. Somerhalder
Interim President and Chief Executive
Colonial Pipeline Company

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge Colonial Pipeline Company to take action on the safety recommendation being issued in this letter.

On June 5, 2017, the NTSB adopted its report on the September 21, 2015, pipeline leak at a shopping center in Centreville, Virginia.¹ The details of this accident and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the investigative report, which can be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov> under report number PAB-17/1.

As a result of this investigation, the NTSB is issuing four new recommendations, including two to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, one to the Association of Oil Pipe Lines and the American Petroleum Institute, and the following recommendation to Colonial Pipeline Company:

P-17-3

Revise the dent excavation evaluation procedure to require either (a) the repair of all excavated dent defects, or (b) the installation of a local leak detection system at each location where a dent is not repaired, continuous monitoring for hydrocarbons, and prompt corrective action to stop a detected leak.

¹ National Transportation Safety Board, *Colonial Pipeline Company Petroleum Product Leak*, Centreville, Virginia, September 21, 2015, PAB-17/01 (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2017).

Acting Chairman SUMWALT, and Members HART, WEENER, and DINH-ZARR concurred in this recommendation.

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations within 90 days. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number. We encourage you to submit your response to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

By:

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III
Acting Chairman